

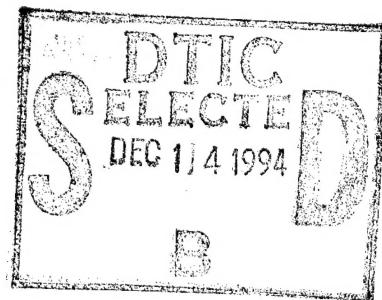
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*The U.S. Role in
Post-Cold War Europe*

*Significance of European Views
of the New U.S. Administration*

Marten van Heuven

National Defense Research Institute



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Preface

The National Defense Research Institute (NDRI) is examining new security concepts to determine the appropriate way to size, structure, and deploy U.S. forces in the post-Cold War era. An important element of this planning effort is consideration of European perceptions of and attitudes about the role Europeans expect the United States to play in the years ahead. This report attempts to assess European views of the U.S. administration and to gauge what role Europeans expect the United States to play, despite all the changes on the Continent.

Research for the report was conducted by the International Security and Defense Policy Center (ISDPC) of RAND's NDRI, a federally funded research and development center sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff. This report was published as a research-support activity within ISDPC.

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Summary

Whether the new U.S. administration can pursue its policy of multilateralism depends significantly on general-public and European leadership perceptions of the United States. The ability of the administration to pursue policies of enlargement and multilateralism will depend in part on how the U.S. administration can shape European views.

The profound political changes in Europe since 1989 are forcing an end to the dependency of West European countries on the United States. Although Eastern Europe depends on the West for assistance in achieving political and economic reform, all European leaders want to reassert control over their own affairs. The Maastricht Treaty concluded by the 12 members of the European Community in December 1991 has been a beacon for such aspirations.

With Washington now interested in so-called constructive engagement—sharing major tasks with other countries—U.S. policy depends on whether Europeans are disposed to cooperate on issues that can be shaped only when the principal industrialized countries, particularly the members of the G-7—Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Japan, Germany, and the United States—cooperate. The United States remains the only country with the capacity for leadership on a global scale, although to term it a *superpower* is a misnomer, as is the epithet “policeman of the world.” Significantly, the United States retains its leadership attraction to many people in the world.

Europe today is unstable. A process of profound political and social change is under way. The trend is away from old party structures and class distinctions and toward egalitarian patterns and direct participation in the political process outside established political systems. As a result, political consensus will be harder to achieve, even as Europe increasingly becomes one large, free-trade area.

Since World War II, the relation between the United States and Western Europe has been close, even though not free from disagreements, or even shocks, such as the Suez crisis. But as the new Europe reaches out to regain control over security on the Continent, it is discovering from the Gulf War experience and the crisis now in the former Yugoslavia that it still needs an American lead. With the Bosnian crisis scrambling the distinction between NATO and out-of-area issues, the Western European Union has been left without a clear task.

It is American policy with respect to the former Yugoslavia that most worries Europeans at a time when European expectations about the United States are beset by uncertainty. Whereas the policy of the Clinton Administration toward Russia, the Middle East, the G-7, and nuclear nonproliferation issues has, on the whole, been welcomed, and American policy in Iraq, Somalia, and the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) has raised questions, the American policy in Bosnia in particular is seen by Europeans as vacillating, causing them to wonder whether the U.S. administration will engage the United States in what they experience as the most serious security issue on the Continent.

The frequent changes in Washington's stand on Bosnia have caused unease in major European capitals and have eroded confidence, particularly in London. Europeans are profoundly concerned that the American position is not so much the reflection of considered policy as an incidental derivative of domestic politics. That the United States may be losing interest in Europe deeply affects the European assessment of organizations, NATO in particular, in which the American role has been prominent. It also shapes the view of new issues, such as that of a German seat in the UN Security Council.

Nevertheless, European governments, opinionmakers, and publics all continue to favor an American role and presence in European affairs. Without an obvious leader in Europe, Europeans would like to see continuation of American involvement. Moreover, American interests are served by a continuation of American engagement in Europe. Suggestions for a more detached American policy—a reluctant American involvement in maintaining European stability—serve neither American nor European interests. Without the American capacity to help shape events, Europe faces more turmoil.

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1. Introduction

Whether the new U.S. administration can pursue its policy of multilateralism depends significantly on general-public and European leadership perceptions of the United States. The ability of the administration to pursue policies of enlargement¹ and multilateralism will depend in part on how the U.S. administration can shape European views.

European desires today are pulled in different directions. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of its hegemonic role in Eastern Europe have created the expectation that, with Germany unified and the European Union (EU)² and NATO extending their embrace eastward, the time has come for Europe to regain control of its own future. However, a number of factors drive European policymakers back to a sense of dependency on the United States: the unsettling distinction between the prosperous West European countries and their poor East European neighbors, concern about a security vacuum in Eastern Europe accentuated by violence in the Balkans, a stagnant economy, latent worries about the course of a newly unified Germany, and uncertainty about the domestic evolution of Russia.

This report examines the views of European leaders and the general public of the new U.S. administration, their significance in European adjustment to a post-Cold War era, and their effect on the ability of the United States to pursue a policy of multilateralism in dealing with European and global issues. The report is based on the premise that the United States retains a double interest in Europe. One interest is to ensure cooperation of key European countries as a crucial element of an effective multilateral approach to global policy issues, including world economic growth. The other interest is to prevent the fragmentation of Europe into alliances characterized by distrust and discord, and potentially requiring another major American effort to avert conflict or violence.

¹The term *enlargement* derives from the title of an address by National Security Advisor Anthony Lake at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies on September 21, 1993. Lake enunciated an approach of enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies.

²The Maastricht Treaty, which created a European Union in December 1991, entered into force on November 1, 1993. This report will therefore use the term *European Union* (EU) rather than the term *European Community* (EC) in previous use, except when it refers specifically to events before that date.

2. European Perceptions of the United States

Origin

The way Europeans view the new administration tells us more about the state of Europe than about Washington.³ It has always been this way. From its birth until today, America has been a beacon for the hopes of individuals in Europe. Many came to this country to fulfill their expectations, and their success generated new hopes and expectations among those who stayed behind.

The appearance of the United States as a major power during this century has also been accompanied by negative reactions, particularly from within the European intellectual class, some of whom have tended to denigrate American popular culture, seeing not inventiveness but gross consumerism, not social mobility but invidious inequality, not sophistication but mass education, not openness but naiveté. However, the contempt for American political culture, particularly that of left French intellectuals, as they compared it with their preferred Marxist outlook, has, with the disappearance of Soviet communism, become a fad of the past.

On the whole, European populations are still remarkably ignorant about America. However, exponentially increased means of communication, accompanied by rapid and cheap travel, have exposed a vastly larger-than-ever cross section of Europeans from all countries and many walks of life to the United States. Trade and investment in both directions have, moreover, created a growing cadre of industrialists, managers, and professional people who move comfortably between the European and American worlds, amplifying the small group of statesmen, soldiers, and diplomats who, until mid-century, had been the principal interlocutors of the transatlantic relationship.

³Here, *Europeans* refers to the leadership in the European countries. This leadership reflects, *grosso modo*, sentiments of the populations of European countries even as, conversely, leaders shape mass opinion. On occasion, European leaders have been out of touch, as in the rejection by Danish voters in the first referendum on the Maastricht Treaty, and in the misjudgment of French President François Mitterrand in his hastily called referendum, in which French voters supported Maastricht by the narrowest of margins.

Two unprecedented American involvements on the European continent have profoundly shaped European perceptions of the United States today: World War I and World War II. Twice in this century, the United States engaged itself in major conflict in Europe. Twice, this engagement made a vital difference. After World War I, the United States left Europe. After World War II, however, it stayed and it played the key role in shoring up the Western effort to contain the threat of Soviet communism.

Along with this shoring up, the Cold War created dependencies. Italy and, particularly, Germany were put back on their feet largely by American initiative and effort. Their habit of responding to American leadership, a necessity at first, gradually turned into a convenient and mostly comfortable pattern. At the same time, the weak economic and military condition of Western Europe created dependencies among former allies. For them, American leadership, first in the Marshall Plan (which also benefited Germany and other former adversaries) and then in NATO, was vital for validating and, ultimately, rendering successful their own at-first-inadequate efforts to hold together the western part of the Continent in the face of the Soviet challenge. Eastern Europe and the Balkans remained, of course, in the grip of communism for better than a generation. The new dependency on the West of the Eastern European countries, including their hope for American assistance, will remain a political reality for the medium term of three to seven years, and probably beyond the next decade.

The profound political changes that have ushered in what is called "the new world order" have now brought about a Europe⁴ that is no longer formally divided. However, differences between Eastern and Western Europe continue in the maturity of political systems, the condition of economies, and the relative sense of security east and west of what used to be the Iron Curtain.⁵ Throughout the Continent there is a strong desire that with the Damoclean sword of Soviet communism removed, Europeans should and can reassert control over their own affairs.

In Western Europe, this ambition has found expression in the Maastricht Treaty, whereby the countries of the European Community spelled out their hopes not only for a free-trade area, a common European currency, and a central bank, but

⁴Europe is a term with many meanings—geographic, historical, political, and cultural. See Hugh Seton-Watson, "What Is Europe? Where Is Europe?" *Encounter*, July–August 1985, pp. 9–17. In this report, Europe refers to the EU and NATO countries, the former Warsaw Pact countries, and the formerly "neutral" countries—Sweden, Finland, Austria, Switzerland, and the former Yugoslavia.

⁵Another view, however, is that Europe is now divided into three parts—though not as envisaged by Caesar in his *De Bello Gallico*—a secure West, an unsure East, and a Southeast characterized by warlike violence. Johann Georg Reiszmueller, "Drei geteiltes Europa," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 22, 1993, p. 1.

also a common foreign and security policy. Surrounded by uncertainty, the EU has become the objective of both the political and economic ambitions of European nonmembers⁶ who wish to join in a quest for prosperity and security. They are now jockeying for a place in the lineup for prospective new members as soon as conditions permit, if not before.

Why European Perceptions Matter

What the citizens of other countries think of America may, at first glance, not seem important. However, public opinion in countries that can affect America's security and prosperity—indeed, its existence as a nation—do matter. Europe, moreover, matters to the United States in a particular way. Europe's actions powerfully affect American interests, although they do not constitute a physical threat to the United States. As is the case at present in the Balkans, Europeans remain prone to producing issues affecting American security interests. Moreover, as a potential economic competitor and trade rival, as well as a market and a target for investment, the way in which European countries conduct themselves has the potential to affect a broad range of American economic and commercial interests.

Even more significant, however, is the effect of European views of Washington on the long and growing list of world issues that can be given shape only if the principal industrialized countries cooperate. European opinion of the current administration matters all the more because of the indications from the White House that Washington intends to follow a policy of "constructive engagement," i.e., a policy in which the United States will seek to share objectives and burdens, shirking the role of world policeman or that of the sole actor. Of the G-7 countries, four—Britain, France, Germany, and Italy—are European. What the G-7 (or rather the G-8, given the pattern of Russian participation) can accomplish depends crucially on these European participants. That they see and understand clearly what the new administration in Washington is about is of great importance to the United States.

⁶Since Europe has no agreed-upon historical definition, the issue has arisen whether some of the former members of the Confederation of Independent States (CIS) are potential members of the EU. The emerging European consensus seems to be that, at least for now, with the exception of the Baltics, they are not. Specifically, Russian membership in the EU would undo the careful balance of the EU, with severely destructive effects on EU cohesion.

3. Europe and the United States

European-American Frictions

The East-West conflict of the Cold War produced stability of a sort on the European continent. Eastern Europe became, for all practical purposes, an extension of the Soviet empire. Hence, Soviet-American contention automatically drew in the East European regimes, even though the trickle of defections provided episodic, albeit powerful, evidence of the continuing attraction of the West—and the United States in particular—for large segments of the population of the East European countries.

In Western Europe, economic recovery, the American security presence in Europe, and the Atlantic Alliance became the elements around which formed a strong and intimate relationship. In this relationship, the element of security dominated all others.

The success of this effort was demonstrated when the system of Soviet communism collapsed, leading to the breakup of the Soviet Union, and setting off a search in historical East European countries for identity, borders, national goals, societal structures, economic objectives, and national security requirements.

During the 45-year Cold War period, when serious confrontation with Soviet power demanded disciplined Western cohesion, differences between European countries and the United States led to disagreements and, at times, confrontation. Perhaps the most vivid example was the open challenge of the Eisenhower Administration to the British and French Suez campaign in 1956. There were other jarring incidents. The cancellation of Skybolt by the Kennedy Administration and the neutron bomb reversal by President Jimmy Carter each strained a close partnership and left European leaders vulnerable. Furthermore, there were repeated instances when German *Ostpolitik* caused nervousness and suspicion in Washington. American administrations also exhibited unease in dealing with perceived tendencies in some parts of Europe toward “neutrality”

and "Finlandization."⁷ Finally, when German unification began appearing achievable in 1990, American support was met by hesitancy in Britain and in France. American policies outside Europe occasionally raised profound European concerns, most notably in the case of Vietnam.

The United States as a Superpower?

Perhaps the most important European view of the United States is that it is still a superpower. But the word *superpower* as applied to the United States today is inaccurate. The term came into vogue to describe a Cold War situation in which there were two major opposing powers—the United States and the Soviet Union—each keeping the other in a strategic nuclear balance. The breakup of the Soviet Union also put an end to its superpower status. Because the strategic nuclear element is no longer the key to America's position in the world today, the term is inaccurate, even though used by seasoned observers of Europe.⁸ Moreover, the term implies a capacity and disposition to use power in a particular way to shape events across the globe. This is an exaggerated notion of the United States today, given the highly visible reluctance of the U.S. military to get involved in potentially open-ended operations. Hence, to call the United States a superpower today is misleading.

Clearly, however, the United States is the only country with the capacity for leadership on a global scale. It provides strategic balance in the Pacific. It functions as the supporter of democracy in Latin America, and as the promoter of economic development there, even though intermittently and with mixed success. It remains the anchor of security in Europe. It is the key actor drawing Russia and the other CIS countries toward the Western community. Its role in Desert Storm makes it a key power in the Middle East. It functions as the catalyst for the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Other countries—China, Brazil, Egypt, France, and India come to mind—exert regional influence and power. None of them, however, can do so consistently on a global scale. Indeed, they are increasingly hemmed in by regional factors that limit their influence and their ability to shape events such as internal

⁷These terms have been variously ascribed to the policies of political parties, such as the German Social Democrats, to pursue accommodation with the Soviets, and of countries, such as Finland, to pursue a delicately calibrated relation with a vast and potentially threatening neighbor.

⁸See, for instance, Reginald Dale, "What Lessons Will Yugoslavia Teach Europe?" The Jean Monnet Council—George Washington University Forum in European Studies, Washington, D.C., Occasional Paper No. 15, July 1993.

preoccupations and resource constraints. This leaves the United States in a singular position.

Limitations on American Leadership

The United States is, of course, not immune to similar factors that constrict its ability to shape external events. Resource limitations are uppermost and are painfully evident, as Congress and the administration are reducing the size of the U.S. military and the foreign aid budget at the same time,⁹ and as U.S. forces overseas are being reduced, especially in Europe. Resource limitations aside, Washington's disposition to engage the United States abroad is also cooling. The end of the Cold War is beginning to force upon the consciousness of the American body politic the need to rethink what should be America's role in the post-Cold War world. To a large extent, this issue remains inchoate and is awaiting articulation. Moreover, the new administration has been extremely cautious about dealing with this issue, choosing to give priority to its domestic agenda.

However, the growing emphasis of the Bush and Clinton Administrations on the United Nations—to benefit from political legitimacy of world opinion, as well as for the objective of pooling resources—indicates a new direction in which the American preference and the pattern are to act with others. There is a virtual political consensus in Washington that the United States cannot and will not be the policeman of the world.

In fact, the world the United States faces today poses challenges of a wholly different nature from those of only a few years ago. On the economic side, the former emphasis on lower interest rates, "locomotive" action—e.g., German willingness to stimulate a sluggish European economy—and free trade has given way to focus on job creation, structural reform, regional trading arrangements, and managed trade. In the field of security, the threat of invasion by national armies across international borders is being replaced by strife and violence within national borders, ethnic conflict, influxes of refugees, protection of minorities, and concern about the spread of weapons of mass destruction. In this environment, the United States will not easily decide to engage, political coalitions are difficult to build or sustain, and objectives are difficult to define.

⁹The State Department has for some time been forced to spread itself thinner. The likelihood of cuts in the intelligence budget is growing.

Nonetheless, even if it lacks the will for it, the United States retains the capacity for leadership,¹⁰ not just in the traditional fields of world economy and international security, but also in medicine, telecommunications, space technology, education, basic science, and a strong private sector that significantly supplements government efforts in international assistance, such as that for refugees.

A Favorable Image

The capacity of the United States to shape world events is widely acknowledged abroad. Some detractors, such as in France, still see behind U.S. actions a barely disguised claim toward hegemony. The historical record of U.S. actions, particularly in the American hemisphere from the Monroe Doctrine onward, provides some basis for such beliefs. However, in today's world, with power diffused among a growing set of actors, such a picture gives a false reading of American actions and intentions. Indeed, the reason the United States is welcome from the Pacific to Europe is precisely because the vast majority of people believe that the United States does not harbor territorial or hegemonic ambitions and, moreover, is the only major power that can be trusted on this score.

Furthermore, the continued attraction of the United States to so many people everywhere in the world is its character as the largest economy, the most open society, the most dynamic community, and, despite restrictions, the most hospitable to foreign immigration. These attributes give the United States a special place in the eyes of many non-Americans, including Europeans, a continuing stream of whom the United States continues to receive as immigrants.

Europe in Transformation

The European continent today is unstable in the West as in the East, German unification and removal of the Iron Curtain notwithstanding. The instability is of a special type, caused by a complex mix of factors both internal to each European country and in the relations of the countries with each other. It is affected, moreover, by major factors external to Europe—the evolution of Russia and the CIS, competition from Japan, heavy dependence on Middle East energy, and its magnetic attraction for immigration from the Third World.

¹⁰See Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, Basic Books, New York, 1990.

In Eastern as in Western Europe, a process of national political and social change is under way. This process is more than simply the normal change associated with the passing of one generation to another. It is the result of the breakup of the old order, by World War II and by the collapse of communism. Now that the pressures that held the two opposing parts of Europe in their respective molds are removed, societal forces of all kinds are breaking up old patterns.

Information is available on an unprecedented scale across national boundaries. People are better educated and better informed, their horizons are broader, and their expectations are higher. Social patterns are changing, away from class and elite toward more egalitarian patterns. Women are a growing factor in professional and public life. In Western Europe as in Eastern Europe there is a quantum jump in the number of people seeking to participate in the political process and societal decisionmaking. This phenomenon is accelerated by the information revolution. What is happening right now is nothing less than a redefinition of societal goals.

There are abundant signs that this process is amounting to radical transformation. Perhaps the most vivid example is presented by Italy. Old ways of doing business are now exposed as inadequate or based on insider dealings and even fraud. Established political parties have disappeared (the Communist PCI), have dropped into insignificance (the Socialist PSI), or have simply crumbled (the Christian Democrats). They are being replaced by new political constellations. Interestingly, it is not the Italian parliament that is driving the change but the Italian judiciary. In Eastern Europe, a large group of political parties and action groups has filled the void created by the disappearance of monolithic communist parties. As participation in the process of societal change widens, consensus becomes ever more elusive.

In fact, the pattern of traditional loyalties to country—variously the empire, the kingdom, the state, the nation, the homeland (*Heimat*)—now exists alongside resurgent loyalties to province, region, linguistic area, and, as now in the former Yugoslavia, ethnic grouping. The multiplication of these layers of societal and political processes vastly complicates the process of building the consensus required to shape and execute domestic policies. The tasks for leadership have become more difficult: Leaders find that they are operating on a narrowing base of support.

This process of political fragmentation stands in contrast to the growing internationalization of the European economies. The EC-92 program of deregulation and market liberalization has now become the model of a Europe increasingly moving toward one large, free-trade area. The growing movement of people, capital, goods, and services within the EU is now attracting, and being

extended to, other European countries, through association agreements and negotiations, toward adhesion of new members to the EU. This process of Europeanization has weakened national boundaries.

But for all the evidence that traditional borders have diminishing effect on European trade and commerce, the power to make significant economic decisions remains with national authorities, as the European exchange rate crisis of September 1992 demonstrates. Decisions on monetary policy are still made at the national level, and will continue to be made there at least during this decade, if not beyond.

In the midst of all these changes, social cohesion at the national level is weakening. Patterns of family, status, education, employment, and leisure are undergoing fundamental transformation, along with religious practices and expectations about citizens' entitlements, education, health care, and social security. These trends are enhanced by the growing presence within many countries, particularly in Western Europe, of persons whose roots are elsewhere: North Africans in France and Italy; Congolese in Belgium; Surinamese and Ambonese in the Netherlands; Turks, Yugoslavs, Eastern Europeans, and others in Germany; and Commonwealth citizens in Britain.

While assimilation of these groups does occur, in many cases without undue difficulties, the growing numbers of nonnative people contribute to societal fragmentation.

European View Through the "Lens" of Instability

Instability also characterizes the external relations among the countries of Europe. The two major extracontinental powers have either disappeared (Soviet Union) or are withdrawing (the United States). Germany has emerged as the new giant, although it is legislatively handicapped in its ability to deploy and use its forces out of area. Other countries are now recalibrating their relationships within the new constellation of forces. They see and seek membership in European organizations as insurance that they will be heard. For most, the presence of the United States remains a guarantee of a balance in Europe that, in their view, safeguards their interests. Thus, basic instability is the condition from which Europeans look beyond their continent and from which they view the United States.

4. The New Europe

The door of the formerly closed part of the Continent was opened to the West with the great changes that occurred in breathtaking succession following the breach of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 and the political turnarounds throughout Eastern Europe that autumn. In the West, confidence surged that, with the removal of the Soviet threat, Europe could at long last start resuming control over all elements of its destiny. During the 1980s, the EU had already moved confidently into an ambitious and, by now, largely successful program of creating a genuine free-trade area among its 12 members, with freedom of movement and freedom from restrictive national regulation. A parallel effort sketched out a future role for a structural component of the EU—the Western European Union—to enable Europe to pursue its own national security and defense, in coordination with NATO.

Elusive Goal of a Common Security Policy

European ambitions for this pursuit have not fared well, however. The Gulf War drove home dual truths: that the only policy Europeans could adopt was to follow the U.S. lead, and that Europeans were ill equipped to do so. The Western success in battle, in which all European participants shared, did not leaven the experience of these inadequacies. The subsequent crisis in the Balkans has exposed the inability of the EU to cope. It has also invalidated the notion that, while NATO would guard NATO territory, the WEU would be able to tackle out-of-area issues. The Bosnian crisis inconveniently scrambled this territorial distinction, leaving the members of the WEU with an organization without a clear task and, at the same time, forcing them to acknowledge the inability of the EU to provide a diplomatic solution to this particularly difficult issue.

This was not for lack of energetic diplomatic activity or involvement. To be sure, the WEU played a role in monitoring (with NATO) maritime access to the Adriatic as part of the UN embargo. Also, the WEU helped organize naval patrol of the Danube to aid in enforcing the embargo. However, when Europe faced the difficult issue of fighting in Croatia and Bosnia, the then European Community was not able to stop the violence or settle the conflict. The European effort fell apart because the EU countries never mustered consensus on the difficult issue of how to meet Serbian, and later Croat and Muslim, use of force, and the related

issue of diplomatic recognition. Thus, the breakup of Yugoslavia punctured European confidence in the ability of the EU and the WEU to cope effectively with major violence on the Continent.

These setbacks—reinforced by British and French reluctance to extend their involvement in the Balkans conflict beyond a troop presence as part of the United Nations Protective Force, and by only tentative indications that Germany could play a role of some significance—have not diminished the wish of Europeans to be able to take a more independent and assertive role in matters affecting their security. Efforts to this end can be expected to continue. Indeed, with interrelationships all over the Continent multiplying now that Europe is no longer divided, efforts to Europeanize Europe's security will logically accompany the weaving of a closer European net. However, the ability to influence nationalism-driven violence will remain limited. Results, if measured in terms of democracy, freedom, and justice, are likely to be a long way off.

At present, therefore, Europe is in the paradoxical situation of wanting to take European security into its own hands but not being able to do so. Europe would like the lead but is discovering that it can only follow the lead of the United States. Thus, with respect to Bosnia, European signals have been mixed: U.S. suggestions for dealing with the crisis—lift and strike—have not been welcome; however, a U.S. role, preferably on the ground, has been highly desired.¹¹

European Expectations of the United States

Expectations of the U.S. role bring up European views and opinions about the Clinton Administration. Given the variety of views, the "lens" of instability, and the short time President Clinton has been in office, the resulting European "picture" is blurry: too many lenses and not enough exposure. But a composite picture can be sketched from what has transpired during the first half of 1993.

A Mixed Reaction

Europeans broadly support the U.S. effort to help the Yeltsin government with its efforts at reform in Russia. The Clinton-Yeltsin meeting in Vancouver in April 1993 was seen as a success, largely because of the president's unambiguous commitment to help Russia. Europeans also support U.S. efforts to deal with the set of problems surrounding the disposition of the former Soviet nuclear arsenal.

¹¹The American suggestions were to lift the arms embargo on Bosnia and to use air power to curb Serb aggression.

Moreover, Europeans support the key role of the United States in moving the Middle East peace process forward. A broad European consensus is that only the United States can play this role, and Europeans are satisfied that Secretary of State Warren Christopher is taking the lead.¹²

The Tokyo meeting of the G-7 in July 1993 was generally judged in Europe as a reasonable success for President Clinton and was widely interpreted as signaling his readiness to assume world leadership.¹³ The reaction was favorable, despite acknowledgments that the U.S.-Japan bilateral accord gave the Europeans little, despite criticism of weakness of the G-7 on Bosnia, and despite the cautious reaction to the quadrilateral meetings on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).¹⁴ Journalists spoke of "America's undisputed leadership in world economic affairs."¹⁵

Europeans are uncertain about U.S. administration policy in Somalia and Iraq. The attack on the Mohammed Farah Aideed compound has, on the whole, received European support, although the question has been raised whether this approach under UN auspices amounts to a new "Clinton Doctrine."¹⁶ The attack on Saddam Hussein's intelligence headquarters elicited criticism, however, and was judged variously as incautious and illegal, although there was a broad sense that something had to be done in response to the clear indications of an attempt to kill then-President George Bush.¹⁷

Despite a desire by virtually all European countries to see a successful conclusion to the Uruguay Round of GATT, there are reservations within the EU countries, and within France in particular, about agricultural and other elements, such as the audiovisual industry.¹⁸ Europeans in EU countries feel caught between the

¹²"Once again, it is in Washington that one should look for the key to a political settlement [in the Middle East]." Philippe Marcovici, *Le Quotidien*, July 28, 1993, as reported in *USIA Daily Digest of Foreign Media Reaction*, July 28, 1993.

¹³Mr. Clinton, according to *La Tribune* of Paris, "proved that he can be perfectly at ease on the international stage. . . . He even stole the show from his hosts." Calling the president's debut on the international stage "a thumping success," London's *Independent* added, "He displayed authority, tact and leadership." Madrid's *Ya* observed, "Clinton has taken the reins." The *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* concluded, "Clinton's behavior during the three-day summit demonstrated that he is prepared to take on the role of leader. In contrast to his predecessor George Bush, who loosened the reins, Clinton set the tone on many issues." *USIA Foreign Media Reaction, Special Report*, July 14, 1993.

¹⁴See *USIA Daily Digest of Foreign Media Reaction*, July 12, 1993.

¹⁵*USIA Foreign Media Reaction, Special Report*, July 17, 1993.

¹⁶In this view, a "Clinton Doctrine" would amount to an American readiness to respond with military force to a call for help from the United Nations in cases where UN efforts were in danger or facing collapse. See Klaus Dieter Frankenberger, "Werkzeug der Vereinigten Nationen," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, June 16, 1993, p. 12.

¹⁷*USIA Foreign Media Reaction, Special Report*, July 9, 1991; *USIA Daily Digest of Foreign Media Reaction*, June 28, 1993, p. 5.

¹⁸See *USIA Daily Digest of Foreign Media Reaction*, July 22 1993, p. 3, and *USIA Foreign Media Reaction, Special Report*, July 26, 1993, p. 2.

demands of Eastern European countries on the one hand, and those of the United States and others on the other hand, for market access, particularly in steel, textiles, and agriculture.

The most serious European reservations about the Clinton Administration have been prompted by the way Washington has handled the crisis in the former Yugoslavia. Europeans have observed U.S. diplomacy range from energetic activism to enforced passivity in a pattern of American vacillation between disinterest when the crisis first arose followed by an apparent strong endorsement of Yugoslav unity by Secretary of State James Baker in 1991; then disengagement until the American declaration of intent, early in 1991, of participating with ground troops of at least division strength to monitor a successful Vance-Owen Plan, and the curiously half-hearted trip of Secretary of State Christopher in May 1993, during which he was informed in person that Britain and France would not support a lift-and-strike policy; back again to repeated declarations that the United States would not commit ground troops, and then a sudden State Department announcement that the United States would use air power, alone if necessary, to prevent the fall of Sarajevo; followed by White House statements that Washington would proceed only with its allies.

In the Balkans, local authorities assiduously weigh American moves. The evidence suggests that threats of the possible use of American force have influenced Serbian behavior: The initiative to lift and strike brought the Serbs to Athens to accept the Vance-Owen proposals. The subsequent stand-down of that threat was followed by Serb refusal to sign the accord.

Views in Key European Capitals

The most-concerned major European capitals—Paris, London, and Bonn—have also kept a wary eye on Washington. Each has a different perspective, but all perspectives are imbued with a sense of puzzlement and frustration about the direction of American policy and the extent of U.S. commitment.

Germany is unable to participate militarily in the Balkans crisis. Consequently, although the German government reacted sharply to official American criticism of its failure to recognize Slovenia and Croatia,¹⁹ Bonn has played a quiet role. Chancellor Helmut Kohl has been pushed by strong anti-Serbian media opinion

¹⁹Secretary Christopher's criticism caused "consternation" in Bonn, where finger pointing of this sort was regarded as hardly conducive to strengthening transatlantic relations. See "Balkan-Disput zwischen Washington und Bonn," *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, Fernausgabe Nr. 139, 20-21 June 1993. Chancellor Helmut Kohl had his speaker say that the U.S. criticism was unjustified. Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel expressed himself in similar terms.

in the Federal Republic and subjected to public pressure to assist both Bosnian Muslims and Croats in Dalmatia and Krajina. At the European Copenhagen Summit in June 1993, he willingly picked up President Clinton's suggestion to push for a suspension of the arms embargo on Bosnia. Bonn has refrained from pushing Washington publicly for a stronger role in the Balkans.²⁰

Paris worries about a perceived U.S. disengagement. France is now the country with the largest foreign military contingent in the former Yugoslavia. French policy has had its share of *virages*, or twists and turns, but the new French government is following a policy of strong engagement, under UN auspices, in the former Yugoslavia. To the extent that there has been French military cooperation with the U.S. military who are involved in various UN operations, it has been effective. Paris would enthusiastically welcome a stronger American military presence and diplomatic role. As part of its policy, France desires to demonstrate its leadership capacity in Europe and, perhaps, to act as a counterweight to possible German influence in the Balkans. Military cooperation with the United States is based on the hardheaded assessment that this is the best way to get things done.

It is in U.S.-British relations that the erosion caused by the Bosnian crisis is most evident.²¹ London views Bosnia as a wedge driving the United States and Britain apart. British policy is set firmly against any role in Bosnia beyond that prescribed in the UN resolutions: to support and make possible the humanitarian efforts of the UN High Commission and other relief operations. London is firmly opposed to anything, such as lifting of the weapons embargo, that will enhance the likelihood of more fighting. Moreover, London—along with Paris—is legitimately concerned that any enforcement action against Serb forces will put its own forces at risk. The London-Washington dialogue on this issue, which traditionally would have been at the core of allied policy formulation, has been thin, and has given rise to concerns in London about the future of the "special relationship."

Peacekeeping

The issue of peacekeeping has also bedeviled the U.S.-European dialogue. But this issue, and its new offshoots of peacemaking and peace enforcement, have triggered what is only the beginning of a debate in the UN Security Council and

²⁰See "Passive Bosnian-Politik in Washington," *Neue Zuercher Zeitung*, Fernausgabe Nr. 143, June 25, 1993, p. 3.

²¹See Jim Hoagland, "The Trust Gap," *Washington Post*, July 1, 1993, p. 23.

national capitals about the challenges to UN military forces in disputes, turbulence, violence, and war. The discussion at this stage has produced a variety of views and has not led to any specific division of views between European countries on the one hand and the United States on the other.²²

A Double Challenge

The mix of European assessments of the Clinton Administration's Bosnia policy contains two key elements. One is a sense of American withdrawal and aloofness. The other is a worry that American diplomacy is driven not so much by strategy as by domestic politics.

Under Secretary of State Peter Tarnoff's remarks on May 25, 1993, although officially disavowed, are interpreted as indicating a calculated U.S. withdrawal from global responsibility.²³ The United States is seen as lacking not only the resources but the will to employ military force.²⁴

The concern that Washington policy in Bosnia—and by extension, in Europe—is merely an expression of short-term domestic political considerations, worries Europeans even more profoundly. Europe has often been bedeviled by the same primacy of domestic over foreign policies and has become accustomed to looking to America to provide a worldview.²⁵ Europeans are disturbed when this view is not forthcoming.

European speculation about Washington's motivation and sincerity is creating a double challenge: to estimate the direction and degree of involvement of the United States in the Balkans crisis, and to assess the American willingness to play a role in Europe.²⁶ The robust pace of American troop withdrawals and base closures, no matter how well explained, has added to European uncertainty. Europeans wonder about American intentions toward NATO. Even the withdrawal of General John Shalikashvili as Supreme Allied Commander,

²²The UN Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has given this discussion a solid foundation in his *Agenda for Peace*, United Nations, New York, 1992.

²³Tarnoff put forth the view that resource limitations would seriously circumscribe the ability of the United States to act.

²⁴Fritz Wirth, "Withdrawal of a World Power," *Die Welt*, July 27, 1993, p. 4, as reported in FBIS-WEU-93-142, July 27, 1993. Wirth goes on to stress the need for U.S. leadership and for that leadership to have a clear moral, political, and humanitarian concept.

²⁵"Perhaps we misunderstand. Christopher's real mission in life is not the formulation and execution of an enlightened American foreign policy abroad, but rather to keep foreign affairs from making serious, vote-threatening trouble for the President at home. By this wholly political measure, Christopher is a big success." Simon Tisdall, *Guardian*, July 22, 1993, as quoted in *USIA Daily Digest of Foreign Media Reaction*, July 23, 1993, p. 7.

²⁶*USIA Daily Digest of Foreign Media Reaction*, August 4, 1993, p. 1.

Europe, may, paradoxically, have been seen as another sign of America's leaving Europe. However, most European capitals are glad to see an officer who knows Europe become Chairman of the Joint Chiefs.

Particularly on issues where American policy has been much in evidence, concern that the United States is losing interest in Europe cuts deeply into long-held European expectations. This is the case in Cyprus, where the United States has steadily sought to back up UN efforts to work toward a solution.

Diminution of the American role in facilitating relations between Greece and Turkey would also heighten the insecurity in the region.

Moreover, with respect to issues yet to come, the American role in Europe will be crucial. One such issue will be membership for Germany in the UN Security Council. The Bush Administration played a leading role in the process that resulted in German unification, overcoming British and French misgivings. London and Paris will be deeply reluctant to approve German Security Council membership, although they cannot avoid it. They know that adding yet another European seat will enhance pressures to strengthen the representation of other parts of the world, leading to a much larger and possibly less effective Security Council. On the other hand, they do not relish the alternative of having to trade their seats for an EU seat on a Security Council that is kept small. It is hard to see how this issue can be resolved over time without active American diplomacy.

5. Discriminating Detachment

The foregoing argument requires a slight digression. In a provocative case against a continued American leading role to secure world order, Christopher Layne and Benjamin Schwarz plead for an alternative approach of "discriminating detachment."²⁷ They argue that continuation of a strategy of a preponderant American role in world affairs and a U.S.-led pursuit of a new world order will lead to open-ended worldwide commitments to intervene militarily to maintain security and stability and to safeguard economic interdependence and hence jobs. They point out that the maintenance of what, in essence, amounts to "military protectorates in economically critical regions to ensure . . . America's vital trade and financial relations" will lead to an "exhausting proliferation" of American security commitments and to strategic overextension.

The Layne and Schwarz position that instability, power balances, and even war elsewhere are tolerable for the United States because the United States is relatively more secure than other countries, does not hold in an interdependent world with peoples who want security and a better life. It certainly does not hold for Europe. Their argument suggests a sharply diminished U.S. role in Europe. While Layne and Schwarz's points about the need to weigh costs and benefits are on the mark, their alternative model, for which they cite Walter Lippmann's notion of a United States learning "to live as a great power which defends itself and makes its way among other great powers" is oddly retrograde.

Their argument would be more convincing if, instead, they had taken it forward to the notion of world or regional community responsibility, as exemplified in the United Nations system or NATO, and to the post-Cold War need to find coalitions of those willing to jointly take on common tasks posed by global security and economic issues. What is needed even more now than before is an agreed-upon international framework that promotes the values of democracy, political freedom, economic growth, and interdependence, and that contains and inhibits state or other behavior to the contrary.

²⁷Christopher Layne and Benjamin Schwarz, "American Hegemony—Without an Enemy," *Foreign Policy*, No. 92, Fall 1993, pp. 5-22.

The political challenges now are how to construct such coalitions of the willing and what role the United States will play in a common effort to make the world secure, free, and prosperous.²⁸ Discriminating detachment, if practiced, would remove the United States from such an effort and severely jeopardize chances of that effort's success. Human nature and international politics being what they are, the task of building coalitions of the willing may, as Layne and Schwarz observe darkly, be Sisyphean, but it is better than letting the stone roll downhill and crush all that is beneath it.

²⁸Dean Rusk is remembered as having observed once that at any time of the day or night, two-thirds of the people of the world are awake, and some of them are up to no good.

6. The Bottom Line

Europe is in turmoil. It seeks to cope simultaneously on a national basis—as a collection of individual, distinct countries—with rapid internal change and on a regional basis—as a single entity—with an emerging but unstable geopolitical configuration in which an external power—Russia—and an internal power—Germany—are cause for not-so-hidden worries. It must deal with violence in the Balkans. It is beset by a sluggish and uneven economy. No European country or combination of countries is in a position to provide the sought-for leadership. Even as the United States is seen as reducing its role in Europe, many Europeans fall back on the habit of looking to America for guidance and leadership.

Yet European leaders and publics see the end of the Cold War as a long-awaited opportunity to take control over their destiny, to realize their wish to handle their security problems within the European family. They have the conviction that the European Union will create Continent-wide economic unity. They harbor the vision that the European Union will establish political unity and a common security policy. They are trying to create a European defense capacity through the Western European Union.

Nonetheless, the leadership of European countries and most of the people they represent, in the West as in the East, prefer to see the new Europe tied to the United States. More than the continuation of habit, this preference springs from the general public's sense and the European leaders' rationally calibrated assessment that an American role in and with Europe is to their benefit.

The United States has a strong interest in responding to this challenge. The view that America can relativize the importance of Europe by greater attention to the Pacific basin or that it can comfortably adopt a posture of discriminating detachment underestimates, if it does not ignore, the degree to which economic prosperity and security in Europe continue to depend on an American presence and role. Trade and investment require continued cooperation. As to European security, NATO's credo that Alliance security is indivisible remains true. Suggestions for American detachment ignore the prospect that a European continent, left to manage its risks by itself, might fragment into unstable coalitions seeking to protect the security of their members without the stabilizing effect that a U.S. diplomatic role and military presence are capable of providing.

American interests continue to require a Europe that is peaceful, stable, economically secure, and capable of action. Long gone is the time when global economic and security issues were amenable to predominant Washington influence and direction. The global agenda requires cooperative efforts of like-minded countries sharing common interests and working together. European countries are America's most likely partners, even if the common preference for open markets calls for competition in trade and commerce. A leading American role remains an important ingredient in the success of such cooperation.

However, in pursuit of any policy that depends on shared efforts to achieve common goals, Washington must remember who its friends are and pay attention to their views. To play a leading role, the United States must encourage a continuing European perception (i.e., a perception among European leaders and publics), that it has the interest, the vision, and the capabilities to conduct itself as an effective catalyst and leader. Declarations about the commonality of roots and objectives will count for little unless they are validated by specific policies based on articulated common interests, seen to be sensible and fair, and carried out with purpose and competence.